



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/671,321	09/24/2003	James D. King	2170-1-3	5658
996 7590 08/21/2007 GRAYBEAL, JACKSON, HALEY LLP 155 - 108TH AVENUE NE SUITE 350 BELLEVUE, WA 98004-5973			EXAMINER FERNSTROM, KURT	
			ART UNIT 3711	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 08/21/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/671,321

Applicant(s)

KING, JAMES D.

Examiner

Kurt Fernstrom

Art Unit

3711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 June 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-61 and 63-68 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-61 and 63-68 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-9, 13-17, 19-28, 32, 33, 36-38, 42-48, 50-58, 61, 63 and 64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Ottrando.

Jackson discloses in Figures 1 and 2 and in the specification a goal tracking system comprising a substrate comprising a surface having a plurality of areas including a title area, a goal statement area and an activity area defining a sports activity, where each area has permanent markings related to the areas as recited. Jackson fails to disclose a movable activity symbol for tracking progress. Ottrando discloses in Figure 1 and in the specification a goal tracking system comprising an activity area having a movable activity symbol removably retained thereon, where the symbol is moved to demonstrate progress towards a goal. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Jackson by providing a movable activity symbol for the purpose of allowing a user to easily track progress toward a goal, particularly since Jackson discloses indicia relating to "yards" being gained as progress towards a "touchdown", to indicate a goal being achieved. With respect to claims 2, 14, 21, 44 and 55, the substrate of Jackson is inherently erasable. The use of an erasable

writing implement such as a pencil is an obvious variation on the teachings of Jackson, as such implements are well known. With respect to claim 3 and 22 as noted above Jackson discloses that the writing relates to yards, and thus defines a correlation between achieving a step of the goal and movement along the sports activity field. With respect to claims 4-7, 23-26, 43 and 54, the daily chores shown in Figure 2 are short term and medium term goals. With respect to claims 8 and 27 the indicia reading "Responsible Football League" is considered to be a positive slogan. With respect to claims 9, 28, 45 and 56, the small football fields of Jackson are considered to be a scorekeeping area. It should also be noted with respect to claims 2-9 that the content of printed indicia will not overcome the prior art where there is no new and nonobvious functional relationship between the indicia and the underlying substrate. See *In re Ngai*, 70 USPQ2d 1862 (Fed. Cir. 2004) and *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381 (Fed. Cir. 1983). Even if Jackson did not disclose or suggest the content of the printed indicia as recited, the claims still would not be allowable for this reason. With respect to claims 13, 32 and 57, as noted above Jackson discloses a football field, where progress towards a touchdown is tracked. With respect to claims 33, 46 and 57, the teachings of Jackson as viewed with those of Ottrando suggest the use of a football as the movable activity piece. With respect to claims 15, 16, 36, 38, 50, 52, 61, 62 and 64, hook and loop systems and computer displays are well known, and are considered to be obvious variations on the teachings of Ottrando. With respect to claims 17, 37, 51 and 63, Ottrando discloses that its display comprises a magnetic board, where the movable activity piece 30 is a magnet capable of being moved along the path. Claims 19, 38, 47

Art Unit: 3711

and 58 are rejected because the indicia does not overcome the prior art under *In re Ngai* as discussed above. The method of claims 42 and 53 is suggested by the combined teachings of the references, as Jackson discloses writing goals and tracking progress using a sports activity field, and Ottrando discloses moving an activity symbol to track progress towards a goal. With respect to claims 48 and 59, the time period recited is an obvious variation on the teachings of Jackson as viewed with Ottrando.

Claims 10, 11, 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Ottrando, and further in view of Leahy. Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando discloses all of the claimed limitations with the exception of the tray for holding the writing implement. This is a well known feature of writing boards, as disclosed for example by Leahy. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando by providing a tray for the purpose of holding the writing implement.

Claims 10, 12, 29 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Ottrando, and further in view of Zand. Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando discloses all of the claimed limitations with the exception of the tray for holding the writing implement. The holding device 26 disclosed by Zand is considered to be an obvious variation on a hook, as it performs the identical function of holding a writing implement. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Jackson as viewed in

combination with Ottrando by providing a hook for the purpose of holding the writing implement.

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Ottrando, and further in view of Staadecker. Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando discloses all of the claimed limitations with the exception of the magnetic dry erase board. This is a known feature of writing boards, as disclosed for example by Staadecker. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando by providing a magnetic dry erase board for the purpose of allowing a user to write on the surface and also move a magnetic piece along the board.

Claims 34, 35, 49, 59 and 60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Ottrando, and further in view of Yamamoto. Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando discloses all of the claimed limitations with the exception of the rubber stamp. It is known to provide erasable ink with a rubber stamp, as disclosed for example in column 3, lines 40-43 of Yamamoto. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando by providing a rubber stamp and erasable ink pad for the purpose of allowing a user easily mark the surface with selected erasable indicia.

Claims 65-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Ottrando, and further in view of Fruge. Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando discloses all of the claimed limitations with the exception of

Art Unit: 3711

the configuration for racing with multiple simultaneous participants. Fruge discloses in Figure 1 and in the specification a goal tracking system comprising markers 26 representing a plurality of users, each associated with a track 32 such that progress of a plurality of users may be simultaneously tracked. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to modify the device disclosed by Jackson as viewed in combination with Ottrando by configuring the device for racing with multiple simultaneous participants for the purpose of allowing a plurality of users to use the device simultaneously.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed June 1, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Jackson discloses a graphic indicia 11A showing a football field, with an associated pair of boxes where a user can check whether or not a touchdown has been made. In a broad sense, this indicia is an activity area comprising third permanent markings defining at least one sports activity field. While Jackson does not disclose a movable activity symbol for moving along the surface to show progress toward a goal, such movable symbols are well known, as disclosed for example by Ottrando and other prior art references. The combined teachings of the references suggest a movable piece on a sports activity field to track progress towards a goal, particularly given that Jackson discusses a user "gaining yardage" and "scoring touchdowns" when chores are

completed. The combination of the teachings does not yield any unexpected results. As a result, the references when viewed as a whole suggest the claimed invention.

Applicant further argues that Jackson fails to teach or suggest all of the elements recited in applicant's claims. However, this is not the test for obviousness. Rather, obviousness can be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either **in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art**. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). As noted above, the references viewed in combination suggest all of the elements of the claimed invention.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

Art Unit: 3711

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kurt Fernstrom whose telephone number is (571) 272-4422. The examiner can normally be reached on M, T, Th 9:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Kim can be reached on 571 272-4463. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

KF
August 16, 2007


KURT FERNSTROM
PRIMARY EXAMINER